

Enhancing Food Security in Africa

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Abstract

This paper critically interrogates the need to enhance food security in Africa. It argues that achieving food security is vital if Africa is to realize the Sustainable Development agenda. The paper explores the progress made towards enhancing food security in Africa. It also examines some of the obstacles facing the realization of food security in Africa. The paper further suggests initiatives which can be adopted towards enhancing food security in Africa.

1.0 Introduction

Food security has been defined as a product of food availability, food access, stability of supplies and biological utilization¹. At the World Food Summit in 1996, it was agreed that food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life². Food security has also been defined to mean access by all people at all times to adequate food for an active healthy life, and entails both the availability of food and the ability of all members to have access to adequate amount of food³.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food security entails several elements including food availability: which refers to the availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or

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¹ Gibson. M., 'Food Security – A Commentary: What Is It and Why Is It So Complicated?'

² Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Food Security.' Available at https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitally/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Cocept_Note.pdf (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

³ Reutlinger, S. and Pellekaan, J.V.H., Poverty and Hunger: Issues and options for food security in developing countries, (The World Bank, 1986)

imports (including food aid)⁴; food access: which means access by individuals to adequate resources (entitlements) for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet⁵; utilization: which refers to utilization of food through adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and health care to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met⁶; and stability: the idea that to be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times and that they should not risk losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks (such as an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events including seasonal food insecurity⁷. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), people are considered food secure when they have availability and adequate access at all times to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life⁸. In addition, it has been asserted that food security is a very important determinant of whether people can lead an active and healthy life, because it determines their access to foods required to meet nutrient needs⁹.

Achieving food security has been described as a key determinant for the realization of the human right to food towards Sustainable Development¹⁰. The right to food has been defined as the right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access – either directly or by means of financial purchases – to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensure a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear¹¹. This right is enshrined at the international level

⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Food Security.' Op Cit

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ World Food Programme, "What is food security?" available at <https://www.wfp.org/node/359289> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁹ De Pee. S., 'Food Security.' Encyclopedia of Human Nutrition., 3rd Edition.,(2013), pp 353-360

¹⁰ Muigua. K., 'Achieving the Right to Food for Sustainable Development in Kenya.' Available at <https://kmco.co.ke/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Achieving-the-Right-to-Food-for-Sustainable-Development-in-Kenya-Presentation-African-Population-and-Health-Research-Center-APHRC-Campus-24th-July-2018.pdf> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

¹¹ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights., 'About the Right to Food and Human Rights.' Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-food/about-right-food-and-human->

under the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*¹² which recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including *adequate food*, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions (emphasis added)¹³. It requires all countries recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, to take, individually and through international co-operation, measures, including specific programmes, which are needed to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge among other measures¹⁴. At a national level, the *Constitution of Kenya*, for example, also recognizes the right of every person to be free from hunger, and to have adequate food of acceptable quality¹⁵.

Food security is at the heart of the Sustainable Development agenda. The United Nation's *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* envisions a world where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious¹⁶. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 seeks to end hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture¹⁷. SDG 2 sets out several targets towards enhancing food security which include ensuring access by all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round; ending all forms of malnutrition; doubling the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition

[rights#:~:text=The%20right%20to%20food%20defined&text=The%20Committee%20declared%20that%20%E2%80%9Cthe,or%20means%20for%20its%20procurement.](#) (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

¹² UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 16 December 1966, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 993, p. 3.

¹³ Ibid, Article 11 (1)

¹⁴ Ibid, Article 11 (2)

¹⁵ Constitution of Kenya., 2010, Article 43 (1) (c)., Government Printer, Nairobi

¹⁶ United Nations General Assembly., 'Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1., Available at

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

¹⁷ Ibid, Sustainable Development Goal 2

and non-farm employment;¹⁸ ensuring sustainable food production systems and implementing resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality;¹⁹ increasing investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries;²⁰ correcting and preventing trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect;²¹ and adopting measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility²². Achieving the targets of SDG 2 is therefore necessary in order to enhance food security.

Enhancing food security is vital for Sustainable Development in Africa. It has been argued that demand for food across the world is increasing, driven by a range of population and demographic changes including population growth, changes in population structure, consumption growth, and urbanization²³. Meeting the increasing demand for food is potentially constrained by factors such as biological performance, climate change, and the local and planetary boundaries that determine the need for agriculture to be more sustainable²⁴. Therefore, meeting the challenges associated with food security require more than simply innovating to increase yields, but also

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid

²³ Benton. T. G., 'Food Security.' Encyclopedia of Applied Sciences., Volume 2, 2nd Edition., (2017), pp 19-22

²⁴ Ibid

demands changes in farming systems to promote the sustainable, and resilient production of food to meet the nutritional requirements of local and global populations²⁵. In light of the foregoing, it has been posited that Africa's food systems must become more resilient and guarantee access to healthy and affordable diets for all²⁶.

This paper critically interrogates the need to enhance food security in Africa. It argues that achieving food security is vital if Africa is to realize the Sustainable Development agenda. The paper explores the progress made towards enhancing food security in Africa. It also examines some of the obstacles facing the realization of food security in Africa. The paper further suggests initiatives which can be adopted towards enhancing food security in Africa.

2.0 Enhancing Food Security in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges

Enhancing food security is an important agenda in Africa. It has been opined that establishing food security is important for millions of people facing hunger in Africa and is crucial for sustainable economic development and long-term prosperity of the continent²⁷. Enhancing food security is essential to achieving Africa's continental collective development objectives²⁸. It has been posited that increasing food production is key in a context in which food demand in Africa, measured by the growth of its population, is expected to increase by approximately 60% in the year 2030²⁹.

Achieving food security can accelerate socio-economic development in Africa³⁰. It has been estimated that more than two-thirds of Africans depend on agriculture for their

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Strengthening Africa's Food Systems., Available at https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/foresightafrica2023_chapter2.pdf (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

²⁷ Munang, R., & Han, Z., 'Food Security: Regional Solutions Key to Solving Africa's Challenges.' Available at <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/web-features/food-security-regional-solutions-key-solving-africa%E2%80%99s-challenges> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

²⁸ Mendez-Parra, M., & Ayele, Y., 'How African Integration Can Help Achieve Food Security.' Available at <https://odi.org/en/insights/how-african-integration-can-help-to-achieve-food-security/> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

income and their basic food needs³¹. Research has shown that countries with higher agricultural growth have lower poverty rates³². Therefore, by improving agriculture and food markets, there is an opportunity to further lift millions of African people out of poverty³³.

It has been observed that African countries are making some progress in improving food security³⁴. For example, improvements in democracy and political stability in some countries in Africa have enhanced the prospects for renewed food production, distribution and purchase³⁵. In addition, it has been asserted that markets are freer and private investment in the food sector is growing in some countries³⁶. Further, according to FAO where there has been a restoration of peace and security, people have been able to resume farming and agricultural production has increased³⁷. In addition, it has been pointed out that in some countries, improved food production is allowing farmers to shift to cash crop development in association with private investment in processing and trading³⁸.

The *Africa Agriculture Status Report*³⁹ highlights the progress made towards enhancing food security in Africa. The Report posits that Africa with its vast arable lands and youthful population, holds the potential to not only ensure food security for its people but also play a crucial role in the global food system⁴⁰. According to the Report, specific

³¹ Australian AID., 'Improving Food Security in Africa.' Available at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/improving-food-security-africa.pdf> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

³² Ibid

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Food Security in Africa.' Available at <https://www.fao.org/3/w9290e/w9290e01.htm#:~:text=The%20development%20of%20human%20resources,the%20direct%20causes%20of%20hunger> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa., 'Empowering Africa's Food Systems for the Future.' Issue 11 (2022), Nairobi, Kenya, Available at <https://agra.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/AASR-2023.pdf> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁴⁰ Ibid

interventions in some countries have had a significant positive impact on food systems in Africa including promising innovations, initiatives, and policies⁴¹. These interventions include Climate Smart Agriculture practices such as conservation agriculture that includes minimal soil disturbance (no-till farming), permanent soil cover, and crop rotation;⁴² agroforestry which integrates trees into farming systems;⁴³ the adoption of weather based insurance schemes in some African countries; improved water management practices including rain water harvesting; and irrigation⁴⁴. In addition, the Report notes that practices such as mechanization, adoption of digital technologies, research and development are revolutionizing food systems in Africa, increasing food productivity and enhancing food security⁴⁵.

As a result of the foregoing efforts, it has been pointed out that African countries are making progress towards tackling hunger and poverty by improving food security, nutrition and incomes in their countries⁴⁶. The need to enhance food security in Africa is set out under several legal and policy instruments at the continental, regional and national levels.

Africa Union's *Agenda 2063*⁴⁷ sets out the need to enhance food security in the continent. It states that for Africa, food security is a matter of national security⁴⁸. Agenda 2063 calls for urgent measures for reducing food insecurity and malnutrition in Africa, among them, the need to implement clear and affirmative policies for sustainable food security⁴⁹. Agenda 2063 correctly points out that considerable financial resources are required to finance the socio-economic transformational agenda in key areas including agriculture

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Australian AID., 'Improving Food Security in Africa.' Op Cit

⁴⁷ Africa Union., 'Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want.' Available at

https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-framework_document_book.pdf (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Ibid

and food security⁵⁰. It further posits that the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will boost food security in Africa through reduction of protection on trade in agricultural produce among African countries⁵¹. Realizing the vision and aspirations of Agenda 2063 can therefore enhance food security in Africa.

In addition, there are a number of continental frameworks and declarations made to combat Africa's food and agriculture problem towards enhancing food security. The *Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa*⁵² recognizes that it is Africa's responsibility to reinvigorate its food and agriculture sector for the economic prosperity and welfare of its people⁵³. The Declaration sets out certain initiatives geared towards enhancing food security in Africa including revitalizing the agricultural sector including livestock, forestry and fisheries through special policies and strategies targeted at small scale and traditional farmers in rural areas and the creation of enabling conditions for private sector participation, with emphasis on human capacity development and the removal of constraints to agricultural production and marketing, including soil fertility, poor water management, inadequate infrastructure, pests and diseases;⁵⁴ and the establishment of regional food reserve systems, including food stocks, linked to Africa's own production, and the development of policies and strategies under the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), to fight hunger and poverty in Africa⁵⁵.

The Maputo Declaration led to the establishment of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) to improve food security and nutrition and increase incomes in Africa's largely agriculture based economies⁵⁶. The CAADP champions reform in the agricultural sector in Africa setting broad targets such as ensuring 6 per cent annual growth in agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and an

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² African Union., 'Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa.' Assembly/AU/Decl.4- 11 (II)

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

allocation of at least 10 per cent of public expenditures to the agricultural sector⁵⁷. It has been pointed out that in the CAADP, Africa as a continent has recognized that enhanced agricultural performance is key to growth and poverty reduction through its direct impact on: job creation and increasing opportunities, especially for women and youth; food security and improved nutrition; and strengthening resilience of food systems in Africa⁵⁸.

In addition, the *Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*⁵⁹ sets out key strategies aimed at enhancing food security in Africa which include, among others: the pursuit of agriculture-led growth as a main strategy to achieve targets on food and nutrition security and shared prosperity;⁶⁰ the exploitation of regional complementarities and cooperation to boost growth;* the application of principles of evidence-based planning, policy efficiency, dialogue, review, and accountability, shared by all New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programs;* the use of partnerships and alliances including farmers, agribusiness, and civil society;⁶¹ and supporting implementation at countries levels, and regional coordination and harmonisation⁶². The Declaration sets out several commitments aimed at enhancing food security in Africa among them being enhancing investment finance in agriculture, ending hunger in Africa by 2025, halving poverty by the year 2025, through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation, boosting Intra-

⁵⁷ Sidler. P., 'Overview on the CAADP, the 2003 Maputo and particularly 2014 Malabo Declarations.' Available at https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Agriculture-and-Food-Security/news/Documents/2018_05_28_overview_caadp_malabo_declaration.pdf (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Africa Union., 'Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.' Available at https://www.resakss.org/sites/default/files/Malabo%20Declaration%20on%20Agriculture_2014_11%2026-.pdf (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid

African trade in agricultural commodities and services, and enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks⁶³.

Further, at a national level, Kenya's *National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2011*⁶⁴ was formulated to add value, build synergies and assist with the implementation of existing national and sectoral policies and strategies to effectively address issues of food insecurity and malnutrition in Kenya⁶⁵. The Policy seeks to ensure that all Kenyans, throughout their life-cycle enjoy at all times safe food in sufficient quantity and quality to satisfy their nutritional needs for optimal health⁶⁶. It aims to achieve certain objectives which include achieving good nutrition for optimum health of all Kenyans; increasing the quantity and quality of food available, accessible and affordable to all Kenyans at all times;⁶⁷ and protecting vulnerable populations using innovative and cost-effective safety nets linked to long-term development⁶⁸. Among the key priority areas under the Policy geared towards enhancing food security in Kenya include ensuring food availability and access, promoting food safety, standards and quality control, nutrition improvement, fostering school nutrition and nutrition awareness, enhancing access to food security and nutrition information, promoting early warning and emergency management in the food sector and financing of programmes geared towards enhancing food security⁶⁹.

The foregoing initiatives have played a key role in enhancing food security in Africa. However, several factors are hindering the achievement of food security in Africa. It has been opined that climate change is reversing the downward trend in food insecurity after many years of improvements associated with the economic development of the continent⁷⁰. Climate change impacts food security in Africa by turning areas once perfectly suitable for agriculture production into deserts and modifying rain patterns,

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Republic of Kenya., *National Food and Nutritional Security Policy, 2011.*, Government Printer, Nairobi

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Mendez-Parra. M., & Ayele. Y., 'How African Integration Can Help Achieve Food Security.' Op Cit

increasing uncertainty and reducing yields⁷¹. For example, it has been pointed out that approximately 37 million people in the Greater Horn of Africa are facing acute hunger in one of the region's worst droughts in decades⁷². It has been argued that food supplies and prices are especially vulnerable to climate change in sub-Saharan Africa because of a lack of resilience to climatic events, food import dependence, and excessive government intervention⁷³. Further, most people in Africa live in rural agricultural and fishing communities that cannot afford infrastructure to protect them from adverse weather⁷⁴. For example, they depend on rain to water their crops, and less than 1 percent of arable land is equipped with irrigation⁷⁵. It has also been pointed out that global geopolitics such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine has worsened the food situation in Africa by increasing prices of commodities and key inputs⁷⁶.

According to FAO, African countries confront many significant political, economic, social and environmental constraints to increased food production⁷⁷. It points out that many of Africa's agricultural and rural development problems have been related to misguided policies, weak institutions and a lack of well-trained human resources⁷⁸. In addition, FAO posits that food insecurity in Africa due to factors such as low yields is a result of poverty since many African farmers lack access to improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides as well as the knowledge and information to use them effectively and efficiently⁷⁹.

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² Mabaya. E., & Richardson. R., & Jayne. T., 'Towards Zero Hunger in Africa: 5 Steps to Achieve Food Security.' Available at <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/towards-zero-hunger-africa-5-steps-achieve-food-security> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁷³ Kemoe. L et al., 'How Africa Can Escape Chronic Food Insecurity Amid Climate Change.' Available at <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2022/09/14/how-africa-can-escape-chronic-food-insecurity-amid-climate-change> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ Mendez-Parra. M., & Ayele. Y., 'How African Integration Can Help Achieve Food Security.' Op Cit

⁷⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Food Security in Africa.' Op Cit

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Ibid

The African Union succinctly captures the challenges the achievement of food security in Africa⁸⁰. It points out that the continent has approximately 60 percent of the world's available arable land and agriculture is the source of livelihood for 70 percent of the population yet it generates only 10 percent of global agricultural output⁸¹. According to the African Union, African agriculture is plagued by challenges such as low productivity, under-investment, urban-biased policies and bottlenecks preventing women's access to productive capital, including secure land tenure⁸². In addition, it asserts that African agriculture also has low value addition and poor rural infrastructure⁸³. According to the African Union, as a result of poor performance, the famine menace that has disappeared from other parts of the world still persists in Africa⁸⁴.

It has also been observed that achieving food security in Africa is threatened by factors such as rapid population growth, prevalence of conflicts, and the continued underinvestment in and marginalization of pastoral areas⁸⁵. In addition, it is estimated that 82 percent of the nearly 149 million Africans facing acute food insecurity are in conflict-affected countries underscoring that conflict continues to be one of the primary driver of Africa's food crisis⁸⁶. For example, 8 of the top 10 African countries experiencing acute food insecurity are facing conflicts⁸⁷.

⁸⁰ African Union., 'Food Security.' Available at <https://au.int/en/auc/priorities/food-security> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ Muigua. K., 'Food Security and Environmental Sustainability in Kenya.' Available at <https://kmco.co.ke/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/FOOD-SECURITY-AND-ENVIRONMENTAL-SUSTAINABILITY-IN-KENYA.pdf> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁸⁶ Africa Center for Strategic Studies., 'Unresolved Conflicts Continue to Drive Africa's Food Crisis.' Available at <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/unresolved-conflicts-continue-to-drive-africas-food-crisis/> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁸⁷ Ibid

As a result of the foregoing challenges, it has been observed that Africa is facing a food security crisis⁸⁸. For example, it is estimated that nearly 282 million people in Africa (about 20 percent of the population) are undernourished, more than a billion people are unable to afford a healthy diet and around 30 percent of children are stunted because of malnutrition⁸⁹. The World Bank further estimates that at least one in five Africans goes to bed hungry and an estimated 140 million people in Africa face acute food insecurity⁹⁰. Africa has therefore been classified as the most food insecure region in the world⁹¹. As a result of these challenges, it has been pointed out that Africa remains off-track to meet the food security and nutrition targets of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and the Malabo targets of ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2025⁹².

It is therefore important to enhance food security in Africa if the continent is to realize the Sustainable Development agenda.

3.0 Way Forward

In order to enhance food security in Africa, it is vital to confront climate change⁹³. Climate change has been identified as a major cause of food insecurity in Africa⁹⁴. Climate change impacts food security in Africa by turning areas once perfectly suitable for agriculture production into deserts and modifying rain patterns, increasing uncertainty and reducing yields⁹⁵. In addition, climate change leads to a breakdown of food systems, resulting in loss of rural livelihoods, income, and ecosystems⁹⁶. According to FAO, climate change

⁸⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition: Statistics and Trends' Available at <https://www.fao.org/3/cc8743en/online/cc8743en.html> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁸⁹ Ibid

⁹⁰ The World Bank., 'Putting Africans at the Heart of Food Security and Climate Resilience.' Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/immersive-story/2022/10/17/putting-africans-at-the-heart-of-food-security-and-climate-resilience> (Accessed on 12/01/2024)

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition: Statistics and Trends' Op Cit

⁹³ The World Bank., 'Putting Africans at the Heart of Food Security and Climate Resilience.' Op Cit

⁹⁴ Ibid

⁹⁵ Mendez-Parra. M., & Ayele. Y., 'How African Integration Can Help Achieve Food Security.' Op Cit

⁹⁶ Relief Web., 'Championing Climate Actions to Avert Food Crises and Malnutrition in Eastern Africa.' Available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/championing-climate-actions-avert-food-crises-and->

affects food security in all its dimensions: access, availability, utilization and stability⁹⁷. It affects food production, and thus food availability⁹⁸. Climate change also impacts the livelihoods and income of small-scale food producers and also, through food price increases and volatility, the livelihoods of poor net food buyers, restricting access to food⁹⁹. In addition, climate change also impacts on the quality of drinking water, which is key to the good absorption of nutrients¹⁰⁰. Africa is already experiencing the impacts of climate change on its food systems. For example, the Horn of Africa region is currently facing a severe drought following the worst performing rains in many years and successive failed rainy seasons¹⁰¹. Further, it has been pointed out that the frequency and severity of the drought is likely to increase affecting more than 36 million people due to food insecurity, with women and girls disproportionately affected by the direct and indirect impacts of the drought¹⁰². It is therefore necessary for African countries to take urgent action to confront climate change and its impacts in order to enhance food security in the region¹⁰³. There is need to embrace climate smart agriculture in order to enhance food security in Africa¹⁰⁴. It has been proved that traditional agricultural practices like agro forestry, intercropping, crop rotation, cover cropping, traditional organic composting and integrated crop-animal farming all have potentials for enhancing crop

[malnutrition-eastern-africa#:~:text=Climate%20change%20leads%20to%20a,people%20in%20sub%2DSaharan%20Africa.](#)
(Accessed on 13/01/2024)

⁹⁷ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Climate Change and Food Security: Risks and Responses.' Available at <https://www.fao.org/3/i5188e/i5188E.pdf> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Ibid

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ United Nations Development Programme., 'Can Groundwater act as a Catalyst for Sustainable Development in Africa's borderlands?' Available at https://www.undp.org/africa/africa-borderlandscentre/blog/can-groundwater-act-catalyst-sustainable-developmentafricasborderlands?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIpM6GnoGxgAMV1uZ3Ch0bkAPOEAMYAyAAEgLKG_D_Bw_E (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹⁰² Ibid

¹⁰³ Muigua. K., 'Reflections on Confronting Climate Change in Africa.' Available at <https://kmco.co.ke/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Reflections-on-Confronting-Climate-Change-in-Africa.pdf> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹⁰⁴ Diagana. O., '3 key Fronts on Which Africa Must Combat Climate Change.' Available at <https://blogs.worldbank.org/africacan/3-key-fronts-which-africa-must-combat-climate-change> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

productivity and mitigating climate change in Africa¹⁰⁵. In addition, it has been suggested that adoption of regenerative agricultural practices such as crop rotation, agroforestry, use of drought- and heat-resistant crops, integrated pest control systems, water harvesting and irrigation can foster high-yielding, climate resilient, and adaptive practices¹⁰⁶. Embracing climate smart agriculture is therefore essential in fostering climate-resilient food systems and enhancing food security in Africa¹⁰⁷.

There is also need to boost Intra-African trade in order to enhance food security in Africa¹⁰⁸. It has been argued that the strengthening of trade links between African countries may make it possible to decrease the risk of food insecurity in the long term through diversification of supply sources and increased ease of access for all farmers to a larger market¹⁰⁹. African countries have been urged to make the most out of the most out of the AfCFTA in order to enhance food security in the region¹¹⁰. AfCFTA aims to strengthen Intra-African trade in food through measures such as phasing out tariffs¹¹¹. It has been asserted that tariffs and, in many cases, Value Added Tax (VAT) and excise duties applied on food are a major culprit of high food prices in Africa which can result in food insecurity¹¹². Implementation of the AfCFTA can therefore strengthen Intra-African trade in food and enhance food security in the region. According to the African Union, the implementation of the AfCFTA will boost food security in Africa through reduction of protection on trade in agricultural produce among African countries¹¹³.

¹⁰⁵ Rinku . S & Singh. G., 'Traditional Agriculture: A Climate-Smart Approach for Sustainable Food Production' *Energy, Ecology and Environment*, No. 2 of 2017, 296

¹⁰⁶ Climate Champions. 'How Regenerative Agriculture Can Increase Africa's Food Production.' Available at <https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/call-to-action-for-climate-resilient-sustainable-food-systemsinafrica/> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹⁰⁷ The World Bank., 'Putting Africans at the Heart of Food Security and Climate Resilience.' Op Cit

¹⁰⁸ Ancharaz. V., 'Intra-African Trade Can Boost Food Security for Millions of People.' Available at <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2023/02/01/intra-african-trade-can-boost-food-security-for-millions-of-people/> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹⁰⁹ Badiane. O., '2022, A Year of Crisis: What Does it Mean for African Trade and Food Security?' Available at <https://www.foodfortransformation.org/full-article/2022-a-year-of-crisis-what-does-it-mean-for-african-trade-and-food-security.html> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ Mendez-Parra. M., & Ayele. Y., 'How African Integration Can Help Achieve Food Security.' Op Cit

¹¹² Ibid

¹¹³ Africa Union., 'Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want. Op Cit

AfCFTA has the potential to spur the development of regional food value chains and reinforce trade among African economies¹¹⁴. It is therefore important to accelerate the implementation of the AfCFTA in order to increase intra-African trade, including in food, and therefore enhance regional food security¹¹⁵.

In addition, it is necessary to strengthen human resources through capacity development in order to enhance food security in Africa¹¹⁶. The lack of well-trained human resources has been pointed out to a major cause of food insecurity in Africa¹¹⁷. It has been argued that the development of human resources is essential for food security in Africa since an educated and informed populace is fundamental to any policies and strategies to reduce poverty, excessive population growth, environmental degradation and other factors that are most often the direct causes of hunger¹¹⁸. According to FAO, there is an urgent need for human capacity development and for increased knowledge and information about food production in order to achieve food security in Africa¹¹⁹. It has been argued that human resource development contributes to food security by enhancing agricultural production and improving human well-being¹²⁰. In addition, it has been correctly observed that efforts to enhance agricultural production, especially among low-income small holders and women farmers, can increase food availability and accessibility, leading to improved food security and human development¹²¹. Human resource development therefore plays a crucial role in promoting food security by empowering individuals and communities to enhance food productivity and improve their overall well-being¹²². Human resource development is therefore a key component of sustainable

¹¹⁴ Ancharaz. V., 'Intra-African Trade Can Boost Food Security for Millions of People.' Op Cit

¹¹⁵ Ibid

¹¹⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Food Security in Africa.' Op Cit

¹¹⁷ Ibid

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ Ibid

¹²⁰ Burchi. F., 'A Human Development and Capability Approach to Food Security: Conceptual Framework and Informational Basis.' Available at <https://typeset.io/papers/a-human-development-and-capability-approach-to-food-security-2w91109jrl> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Ibid

agricultural production and improved food security in Africa¹²³. It is therefore vital to enhance human capacities in order to strengthen food security in Africa. It has been argued that Africa must invest in domestic human, institutional and system-wide capacities and capabilities in order to achieve food security¹²⁴.

Further, there is need to enhance investments in in food systems in order to achieve food security in Africa. The CAADP urges African countries to enhance investments in food systems by allocating at least 10 per cent of public expenditures to the agricultural sector¹²⁵. It has been argued that through investments, Africa can build resilience in its food systems and enhance food security¹²⁶. For example, investing in irrigation can minimise dependence on rain-fed agriculture so that food can be produced year-round even when rains fail¹²⁷. In addition, investing in research and development can lead to the adoption of drought-resistant and water-efficient varieties of crops that can enhance food security in Africa.¹²⁸ It is therefore necessary for African countries to increase investments in agri-food systems in order to achieve food security¹²⁹. In addition, it is vital for African countries to invest in research and development on food systems in order to enhance food security¹³⁰. This can lead to the adoption of higher yielding seed varieties, mechanisation, improved soil management and conservation practices and profitable and efficient fertiliser use towards enhancing food security in the region¹³¹.

¹²³ Food and Agriculture Organization, 'Food Security in Africa.' Op Cit

¹²⁴ Mabaya. E., & Richardson. R., & Jayne. T., 'Towards Zero Hunger in Africa: 5 Steps to Achieve Food Security.' Op Cit

¹²⁵ Sidler. P., 'Overview on the CAADP, the 2003 Maputo and particularly 2014 Malabo Declarations.' Op Cit

¹²⁶ Nwafor. A., 'Investment for Resilience in African Food Systems.' Available at <https://farmingfirst.org/2023/03/investment-for-resilience-in-african-food-systems/#:~:text=Building%20resilience&text=This%20means%20investment%20in%20irrigation,them%20in%20times%20of%20loss.> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹²⁷ Ibid

¹²⁸ Ibid

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ Traub. L. N., Jayne. T., & Sihlobo. W., 'Research and Development are Key to Resilient Food Systems in Africa.' Available at <https://theconversation.com/research-and-development-are-key-to-resilient-food-systems-in-africa-165251> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹³¹ Ibid

It is also vital to address conflicts in the continent. Evidence points out to a relationship between conflicts and food insecurity in Africa¹³². Most Africans facing acute food insecurity are in conflict-affected countries underscoring that conflict continues to be one of the primary driver of Africa's food crisis¹³³. African countries such as Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Central African Republic which have been characterized by conflicts for many decades are some of the most food insecure countries on the continent¹³⁴. According to FAO, armed conflict, both within and between countries, is another central factor contributing to food insecurity in Africa¹³⁵. FAO posits that conflict and food insecurity are inextricably linked, each triggering and reinforcing the other¹³⁶. Some people living in food-insecure communities feel they have been marginalized by central governments¹³⁷. At the same time, conflict itself almost always intensifies hunger, since it drives people from their homes and disrupts marketing and distribution systems¹³⁸. Addressing conflicts and fostering peace is therefore necessary in enhancing food security in Africa.

Finally, there is need for African countries to embrace sustainable management of natural resources in order to enhance food security in the region¹³⁹. The African Union correctly points out that the continent has an abundance of natural resources that can enhance food security in the region including arable land, fresh water resources comprising of large rivers and lakes such as the Congo, Nile, Zambezi and Niger and Lake Victoria, forests and the blue/ocean economy¹⁴⁰. However, despite the presence of these resources, food insecurity continues to be a major challenge in the continent¹⁴¹. This has been attributed

¹³² Africa Center for Strategic Studies., 'Unresolved Conflicts Continue to Drive Africa's Food Crisis.' Op Cit

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Ibid

¹³⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Food Insecurity in the Horn of Africa.' Available at <https://www.fao.org/3/x8530e/x8530e02.htm> (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Africa Union., 'Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want. Op Cit

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

¹⁴¹ Ibid

to unsustainable practices including poor cultivation practices including over cultivation, over grazing, deforestation, overfishing among others¹⁴². It has been posited that well managed natural resources can contribute to income and food security improvement especially in rural populations¹⁴³. African countries should therefore embrace sustainable and sound management of their natural resources including land, forests, water resources, fisheries and the blue economy in order to enhance food security¹⁴⁴.

The foregoing among other measures are necessary in order to enhance food security in Africa.

4.0 Conclusion

Achieving food security is a key determinant for the realization of the human right to food towards Sustainable Development¹⁴⁵. SDG 2 seeks to end hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture¹⁴⁶. Enhancing food security is important for millions of people facing hunger in Africa and is crucial for sustainable economic development and long-term prosperity of the continent¹⁴⁷. There has been some progress towards enhancing food security in Africa¹⁴⁸. However, achieving food security continues to be a major challenge in Africa. Africa has been classified as the most food insecure region in the world a situation that has been attributed to factors such as climate change, prevalence of conflicts and weak human capacities among others¹⁴⁹. It is necessary to enhance food security in Africa in order to achieve Sustainable Development. This can be fostered through measures such as

¹⁴² Bouda. Z., 'Natural Resource Management and Food Security in Africa.' Available at https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-69626-3_75-1 (Accessed on 13/01/2024)

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ Ibid

¹⁴⁵ Muigua. K., 'Achieving the Right to Food for Sustainable Development in Kenya.' Op Cit

¹⁴⁶ United Nations General Assembly., 'Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1., SDG 2

¹⁴⁷ Munang. R., & Han. Z., 'Food Security: Regional Solutions Key to Solving Africa's Challenges.' Op Cit

¹⁴⁸ Australian AID., 'Improving Food Security in Africa.' Op Cit

¹⁴⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization., 'Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition: Statistics and Trends' Op Cit

confronting climate change¹⁵⁰; boosting Intra-African trade¹⁵¹; strengthening human resources through capacity development¹⁵²; enhancing investments in in food systems¹⁵³; addressing conflicts in the continent¹⁵⁴; and embracing sustainable management of natural resources¹⁵⁵. Enhancing food security in Africa is an agenda that needs to be fast-tracked in order to achieve Sustainable Development.

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¹⁵⁰ The World Bank., 'Putting Africans at the Heart of Food Security and Climate Resilience.' Op Cit

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¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ Africa Center for Strategic Studies., 'Unresolved Conflicts Continue to Drive Africa's Food Crisis.' Op Cit

¹⁵⁵ Africa Union., 'Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want. Op Cit

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